

Paul said in verses 4-7

1 Cor 12:4-7

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

Each of us is unique.

The Lord has given you gifts that are unique to you.

Then in verse 12 Paul says that,

1 Cor 12:12

12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.

1 Cor 12:18-19

18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. 19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

Two things in these verses, first, don't complain.

- If you complain you're complaining against God

second,

- you're needed,
- where would the body be?

The Corinthian church wanted to be independent instead of being part of the body.

That was a dangerous place for them,

That's why Paul says:

20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

Paul wasn't writing to the Corinthians just to spout off.

- He was writing to remind them of the issues they had.

The body is vital for growth in the Lord:

Eccl 4:9-10

9 Two are better than one,

Because they have a good reward for their labor.

10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.

But woe to him who is alone when he falls,

For he has no one to help him up.

This isn't speaking of body parts, but of the brethren, we need one another.

Next, Paul has to deal with another issue in the church and that was esteeming one gift over another.

So Paul tells the Corinthians,

22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. 23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty,

The internal organs in our body are hidden for a reason, they're vital.

Paul is saying ministry is much the same way. Those working behind the scene are usually the most important.

Matt 6:3

3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

He was talking about doing good to please God.

Vs 23: On these we bestow greater honor. To bestow means (to put around or to wrap). Then he goes on to say that our unpresentable parts have greater modesty.

Each of us have body parts that we want to hide,

- we cover them up.

By doing so,

- we bestow greater honor upon those body parts.

Phil 2:3

3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

1 Cor 12:24

24 but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, 25 that there should be no schism (divisions) in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

Listen, you'll live if you lose a big toe.

If you were to lose a finger you can still use your hand.

If however you were to lose an arm, or perhaps a leg, it would be more difficult to manage your daily affairs.

If we were to lose part of the body our body wouldn't function as if we were complete.

Atrophy:

- That's a wasting away of body parts.
- I think sometimes people have a sort of spiritual atrophy.
- We get tired,
- maybe bored,
- discouraged,
- get our feelings hurt,

Priorities in our life change,

Heb 10:23-25

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up (to sharpen) love and good works;

26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

God didn't put our body together so it would fall apart. When part of the body is injured then the rest of us should come to the aid of that person in the body.

1 Cor 12:27-31

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. 28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. (Paul is pointing out the diversity in the body of Christ)

29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

Chapter 13:

One of the attributes in scripture used to describe the character and nature of God is found in 1 Jn 4:8 where John says that "God is love."

Chapter 13 is about God's Love!

1 Cor 13:1-8

13 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never fails.

1 Cor 13:1

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

Paul spoke more than one language,

I believe Paul was saying,

- “Hey, I may speak other languages,
- but if I’m not speaking thru love,
- then it’s all for naught.

Be sensitive to the Spirit and to others when sharing the gospel.

There are 4 different Greek words used for love.

- Éró̄s - which was primarily used for sensual love between sexes
- Stérgō - describes love between family members.

This word Stérgō is used by Paul speaking of the last days and the lack of family love where he says that people will be:

2 Tim 3:3

3 unloving, (speaking of family members towards one another) unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,

- Philia or Phileo - A little more intimate than Stérgō
- Agápe - Which is the nature of God’s love

If we don’t have this type of Agape love then it’s like sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

The word “sounding” is derived from the Greek word échō,

- and it means to sound or resound as of the roaring of the sea.

In Paul's time, the cymbal was more like a cup shaped piece of brass.

When a person continues to sin, eventually that becomes part of his life. That's what he has become. We don't want to be that clanging cymbal that is annoying to others.

1 Cor 13:2-3

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. Later in 2 Cor 5:14 Paul gives his motivation for ministry, it was the love of Christ.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Paul will list at least 16 characteristics of God.

He says in verse 4 that love is longsuffering.

When Jesus taught on the beatitudes on the Mountain,

- He had just silenced the Sadducees
- regarding the resurrection and marriage in heaven.

Then the Pharisees came along

- not to rejoice over their enemies the Sadducees,

They thought

- He would lead people away
- from their authority as well.

So one of the Pharisees, a lawyer (skilled in the Mosaic law) asked Jesus a question (Matt 22:35), testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"

They're trying to get Him to prioritize

- between the 613 commandments of God.

Jesus reduced his answer to two commandments.

- First: Deut 6:5 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

We should love God, with our heart, our soul and our strength.

The only way we can love others

- and truly love them
- is if we Love God first.

1 Cor 13:4 Paul says,
LOVE SUFFERS LONG OR IS LONGSUFFERING:

- In other words, we are not easily angered

It may be within me to take vengeance but because of the love of Christ I'm not going to.

When Peter asked Jesus how many times shall he forgive his brother and Jesus told him 70x7.

Later, Peter wrote, 2 Peter 3:9

9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

When on the cross Jesus' infamous words were, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

Matt 5:43-47

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

LOVE IS KIND!

In Col 3:2 we're told to put on kindness, humility, meekness and longsuffering. We are to bear with one another and forgive one another.

We've all heard the term, "actions speak louder than words."

LOVE DOES NOT ENVY:

- 1) When someone covets someone else's possessions
- 2) Wishing that the person having something didn't have it

Biblical Examples:

Mk 15 - Pilate knew that Jesus had been handed over to him because of envy.

Gen 37 - Joseph was sold to the Ishmaelites for 20 shekles of silver.

James said where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there 3:16.

LOVE DOES NOT PARADE ITSELF: Does not elevate itself above others.

LOVE IS NOT PUFFED UP: In the NT it's spoken only of pride or self-conceit.

Example: 1 Cor 4:7

7 For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

What you have is because it was gifted to you so why do you boast about your possessions. The only thing we should ever boast on is the cross!

LOVE DOES NOT BEHAVE RUDELY:

There are two Greek words in the NT used for "rude."

Aschēmōnēō - to behave in an ugly or shameful manner

Schéma - to shape or to plan.

The word Schéma refers to the outward appearance, the shape it takes before others.

So Paul isn't only concerned with the Christian character,

- but the way he expresses his character outwardly.